

Message

What you need to know to start your day.

**From:** Bloomberg Environment -  
Environment & Energy Report  
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**Sent:** 4/18/2019 11:08:52 AM  
**To:** Bertrand, Charlotte  
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**Subject:** First Move: Nuclear  
Regulator's Work to Prevent  
Reactor Floods Criticized

**Bloomberg  
Environment**

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## **Nuclear Regulator's Work to Prevent Reactor Floods Criticized**



By [Chuck McCutcheon](#)

Former Nuclear Regulatory Commission members and outside critics say the current panel hasn't done enough to require nuclear plant owners to take preventative measures on flooding, and that risks are increasing as climate change worsens, Bloomberg News writes.

- Fifty-four of the plants operating in the U.S. weren't designed to handle the flood risk they face, a Bloomberg News review of correspondence between the commission and plant owners found. Fifty-three weren't built to withstand their current risk from intense precipitation; 25 didn't account for current flood projections from streams and rivers; 19 weren't designed for their expected maximum storm surge.
- The commission's three members appointed by President Trump say existing regulations are sufficient to protect reactors. But former Chairman Gregory Jaczko says U.S. work on the issue done after Japan's 2011

Fukushima-Daiichi meltdown “is for naught because the commission rejected any binding requirement to use that work. It’s like studying the safety of seat belts and then not making automakers put them in a car.”

## **FLAMMABLE GRASS CAUSING HEADACHES IN WEST**

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A highly flammable plant called cheatgrass is frustrating federal and state officials who are trying to address Western wildfire threats, Rebecca Kern writes.

- Wildfires in shrublands and grasslands, which make up a third of the U.S., have burned more acres than those in forested lands over the last 20 years, but tend to get less media attention.
- “Science has already shown us that having cheatgrass doubles the risk of wildfire,” said Jeremy Maestas, a sagebrush ecosystem specialist with the Agriculture Department’s Natural Resources Conservation Service in Portland, Ore.

## **DEUTCH PUSHES CARBON TAX PROPOSAL**

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Rep. Ted Deutch (D-Fla.) wants to get lawyers on board with his carbon tax plan, which has gained nearly two dozen Democratic co-sponsors since its re-introduction in January.

- Deutch is speaking today about his bill, H.R. 763, at an April 18 conference where lawyers are focusing on using the law to combat climate change. His bill with Rep. Francis Rooney (R-Fla.) would set a carbon tax of \$15 per metric ton. The fee would then increase by \$10 annually, with all revenue rebated to U.S. households.
- The National Conference of Lawyers Committed to Addressing the Climate Emergency, in its third year, will include also remarks from other policymakers. They include Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.), who will discuss the Green New Deal that he is sponsoring with Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), and Washington Gov. Jay Inslee (D), who has made climate change the central part of his 2020 presidential run.

## **WHAT ELSE WE’RE WATCHING**

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Manhattan's Trump Tower

Photographer: Allison Joyce/Bloomberg via Getty Images

- New York's City Council is expected to approve legislation seeking to reduce energy consumption by some of the city's largest buildings, including Trump Tower. The midtown Manhattan edifice used more energy per square foot than 93 percent of large residential buildings, according to a coalition of labor and community groups that supports the legislation.
- New Jersey's Board of Public Utilities is expected to vote on nuclear subsidies for Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG), the state's biggest utility.
- The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission holds its monthly meeting. Among the agenda items are permit applications for Port Arthur LNG and Driftwood LNG, two projects that received their final environmental impact statements in January.
- The D.C. Bar is holding a discussion on an EPA proposal that seeks to ax the legal basis for the 2012 mercury and air toxic standards at power plants, while retaining the limits that already have been met. Panelists include Justin Schwab, EPA's deputy general counsel, and Jeff Holmstead, a Bracewell LLP attorney who served as EPA assistant administrator for air and radiation under President George W. Bush.

## DAILY RUNDOWN

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### Top Stories

#### California Water District Sues Over Colorado River Drought Plan

The Colorado River's largest water user wants the courts to halt drought-planning efforts along the Lower River Basin until a proper environmental review can be conducted.

#### EPA to Oversee More Products With Asbestos Under Final Rule

U.S. manufacturers would be barred from reviving abandoned uses of the cancer-causing mineral asbestos without EPA approval, under a final agency rule released April 17.

## Energy

### Iowa Agriculture Presses Trump to Keep Promises on Ethanol

President Donald Trump will betray his promise to support the U.S. ethanol industry if his administration exempts any small refineries from 2018 blending requirements, Iowa biofuel advocates said

### Utah Coal Mining Lease Draws Environmental Challenge

The Interior Department failed to adequately assess the environmental risks when it approved the expansion of a Utah coal mine onto federal land, according to a new federal lawsuit.

## Environment

### New Drinking Water Proposals for Perchlorate Just Weeks Away

The EPA is likely weeks away from unveiling a proposal to regulate a new contaminant in drinking water for the first time since the George W. Bush administration.

### EU Talks to Be Used to Keep U.S. in Paris Accord, Official Says

European Union negotiators are expected to use upcoming trade talks with the U.S. as a way to pressure the Trump administration to stay in the Paris climate agreement, an EU official said.

## TODAY'S EVENTS

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- **12:30 p.m. • Sustainability** • Rachael Sherman, director of global sustainability for McDonald's Corporate Supply Chain and Sustainability team, talks at George Washington's international affairs school about corporate engagement on environmental sustainability issues.
- **4 p.m • Water Security** • USAID hosts a panel discussion on the myriad threats to global water security from climate impacts, such as flooding, droughts, and varied rainfall patterns.

## AROUND THE WEB

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- Fiat Powertrain Technologies Industrial S.p.A will pay \$6.4 million in penalties for emissions-related violations affecting nearly 2,000 on-road and off-road diesel engines, the California Air Resources Board announced. The settlement includes a mandatory recall of affected vehicles.

- Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), a 2020 presidential aspirant, [has introduced](#) a bill to effectively eliminate the pesticide chlorpyrifos from school meals.
- A settlement that New York's attorney general reached with American Electric Power over Clean Air Act violations [is funding](#) a new fleet of all-electric delivery trucks in New York City.
- The Energy Department [is asking](#) a federal judge to dismiss Nevada's lawsuit challenging plutonium shipments to the state while an appeals court considers whether to overturn the judge's earlier refusal to temporarily block the shipments.

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